

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EUR-12 CU-02 EB-07 OMB-01
TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
DHA-02 /093 W
-----110853Z 035391 /15

P R 101625Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8506
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ACCRA 4435

LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PGOV, GH
SUBJ: STUDENTS CALL FOR END OF ACHEAMPONG REGIME, RETURN TO
CIVILIAN RULE

REF: ACCRA 4263 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: IN A 10-PAGE STATEMENT DATED JUNE 8,
STUDENT LEADERS DEMANDED THAT ACHEAMPONG STEP DOWN
AND CALLED ON CHIEF JUSTICE TO HEAD AN INTERIM GOVERN-
MENT PLEDGED TO RETURN COUNTRY TO CONSTITUTIONAL
RULE WITHIN ONE YEAR. STUDENTS BITTERLY CRITICIZED
ACHEAMPONG GOVERNMENT FOR ECONOMIC MISMANAGEMENT,
CORRUPTION AND VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN A PASSIONATE IF SOMEWHAT RAMBLING STATEMENT
DISTRIBUTED BY UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEADERS ON JUNE 9,
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FOLLOWING POINTS WERE MADE:

3. A NEW GOVERNMENT: STUDENTS DEMAND THAT SUPREME
MILITARY COUNCIL (SMC) "MUST GO OUT OF OFFICE
IMMEDIATELY." POWER MUST BE HANDED OVER TO "THE HEAD
OF THE JUDICIARY OF GHANA" (I.E., THE CHIEF JUSTICE),
WHO WOULD APPOINT AN INTERIM GOVERNING BODY FOR A

TRANSITION PERIOD TO CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT. DURING THIS ONE YEAR INTERIM PERIOD, CHIEF JUSTICE WOULD SET UP A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TO DRAFT A NEW CONSTITUTION AND ARRANGE FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS. IN APPOINTING OFFICIALS TO HELP HIM IN THESE DUTIES, STUDENTS INSIST THAT HE MUST NOT APPOINT ANY FORMER POLITICIAN OR ACTIVIST OF SMC REGIME.

4. STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS: DEMONSTRATIONS OF MAY 13-14 WERE STAGED BECAUSE ALTHOUGH STUDENTS KNEW POLICE AND SOLDIERS WOULD "BEAT, TORTURE AND MURDER US" THEY WISHED TO SIDE WITH WORKING MASSES OF GHANA WHO ARE "SUFFERING TO DEATH UNDER AN INEFFICIENT, CORRUPT AND OPPRESSIVE MILITARY REGIME." STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED TO "PUBLICLY PROCLAIM OUR DENUNCIATION AND CONDEMNATION OF THE SMC GOVERNMENT AND DEMAND THEIR IMMEDIATE RESIGNATION FROM POLITICAL OFFICE." SMC IS CHARGED WITH TRYING TO PUSH "CONFUSED AND UNPOPULAR IDEA OF UNION GOVERNMENT" DOWN PEOPLE'S THROATS AND WITH ECONOMIC MISMANAGEMENT, RAMPANT CORRUPTION, FLAGRANT SUPPRESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AND HAVING "IRREVOCABLY ACCEPTED A CAPITALIST PHILOSOPHY." LACKING "ANY INTELLIGENT AND EFFICACIOUS POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY WHICH WOULD ELIMINATE EXPLOITATION OF THE ORDINARY WORKING MASSES AS WELL AS POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INJUSTICES," SMC IS ACCUSED OF EXPLAINING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND HARDSHIPS "ONLY IN TERMS OF IDEALISTIC AND MORAL PLATITUDES."

5. UNION GOVERNMENT: CITING 10 REASONS WHY THEY OPPOSE
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UNION GOVERNMENT, STUDENTS HOLD THAT SMC OFFICERS "HAVING NOW LOST ALL CREDIBILITY BEFORE GHANAIANS, AND HAVING LOST ALL HOPE OF CONTINUED EXISTENCE IN POWER, ARE ONLY MAKING THE DESPERATE ATTEMPTS OF A DYING BEAST TO IMPOSE BY FORCE (THE) BOGUS AND FRAUDULENT IDEA OF UNION GOVERNMENT ON GHANAIANS SO THEY CAN LEGALIZE THEIR CONTINUED EXPLOITATION OF THE SUFFERING WORKING MASSES."

6. ECONOMIC MISMANAGEMENT: SMC IS CHARGED WITH BEARING "DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE GROSS MISMANAGEMENT OF THE ECONOMY, THE SERIOUS FOOD SHORTAGES, EXTREMELY HIGH COST OF LIVING AND THE RAMPANT AND APPARENTLY OFFICIALLY LEGALIZED CORRUPTION IN OUR SOCIETY." STUDENTS ARGUE THAT "GHANA MUST TURN FROM THIS INDIVIDUALIST MODE OF ECONOMIC PLANNING AND STRATEGY, BECAUSE SELFISHNESS AND ALL RELATED CORRUPT PRACTICES ARE INHERENT IN THIS SYSTEM." PROFESSING TO BE APPALLED BY SMC'S PLEA IT CANNOT CONTROL SMUGGLING. STUDENTS POINT OUT THAT "MOST OF THE SMUGGLING IS DONE EITHER

BY THE SOLDIERS THEMSELVES OR THROUGH THEIR ACTIVE COOPERATION. OTHERWISE IT WOULD BE A GREAT WONDER TO IMAGINE THAT ARMED SOLDIERS PATROL OUR BORDERS AND YET SEVERAL LOADS OF COCOA FOODSTUFFS AND HEAVY TIMBER LOGS ARE CARTED ACROSS OUR BORDERS*" OPERATION FEED YOURSELF IS WRITTEN OFF BY STUDENTS AS A PUBLICITY STUNT AND A CLEAR FAILURE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ACCRA 4435

LONDON FOR SEITZ

7. CORRUPTION: STUDENTS CITE FIVE EXAMPLES OF CURRUPT ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING IMPORTATION OF MERCEDES AND PORCHE BY GENERALS SOLEIL AND OKAI AND THEIR SUBSEQUENT PROMOTIONS TO HIGHER RANK AND RETIREMENT ON FULL SALARIES. IN ADDITION, WIVES OF JOED FORCES PERSONNEL ARE CHASTISED FOR SELLING ALL TYPES OF COMMODITIES, INCLUDING IRON RODS (ESSENTIAL FOR REINFORCED CONCRETE), FLOUR, CEMENT, CARS AND LAND.

8. VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS: SMC IS CRITICIZED FOR IGNORING FREEDOMS OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, MOVEMENT AND ASSOCIATION. STUDENTS NOTE PRESS CANNOT OPERATE FREELY AND THAT THERE ARE ONLY TWO INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS IN COUNTRY--CATHOLIC STANDARD, WHICH IS UNDER PRESSURE FROM

MC FOR OUTSPOKEN VIEWS AND KUMASI PIONEER WHICH HAS
BEEN "UNOFFICIALLY BUT EFFECTIVELY BANNED" SINCE ITS
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LICENSE IS NOT BEING RENEWED. STUDENTS CITE FIVE
INSTANCE OF GHANAIS BEING ARRESTED* TORTURED OR
KILLED. IN GENERAL, STUDENTS ASSERT "PEOPLE ARE
ARRESTED, DETAINED WITHOUT TRIALS OR WITH MOCKETIES
OF TRIALS: ASSETS OF CERTAIN CITIZENS ARE FROZEN AND
DEFROZEN, JUST AS CERTAIN PEOPLE IN RESPONSIBLE
POSITIONS ARE 'RELIEVED OF THEIR POSTS' AND FOR ALL
THESE NO TRUE EXPLANATIONS ARE OFFERED BY THE GOVERN-
MENT TO THE CITIZENS OF THIS COUNTRY."

9. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE AUTHORS OF THE STATEMENT
WERE NOT IDENTIFIED, WE HAVE HEARD THAT THE DOCUMENT
WAS DRAFTED ON JUNE 7 IN KUMASI BY PRESIDENTS OF
STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL OF THE THREE UNIVERSITIES
AND BY EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF
GHANA STUDENTS (NUGS). THESE INDIVIDUALS HAD
ASSEMBLED IN KIMASI AT THE REQUEST OF THE ASANTEHENE
AND CHIEF JUSTICE AZU CRABBE TO WORK OUT AN AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE STUDENTS AND THE SMC. HOWEVER, THE
STUDENT LEADERS SUBSEQUENTLY DECIDED NOT TO MEET
WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S ENVOYS AND DRAFTED THE
STATEMENT INSTEAD. COPIES OF THE DOCUMENT HAVE
REPORTEDLY BEEN MAILED TO ACHEAMPONG AND THE ASANTHENE
WHILE OTHERS WERE POSTED BY VARIOUS LOCATIONS ON CAMPUS.

10. THE THEMES CONTAINED IN THIS STATEMENT ARE WIDELY
KNOWN AMONG STUDENT LEADERS. A KUMASI STUDENT LEADER
(SOURCE OF REFTEL) VISITED EMBASSY AGAIN JUNE 10 AND
PROVED FAMILIAR WITH NUGS VIEWS. (FYI, HE SAID THAT
UNIVERSITIES WILL NOT RPT NOT OPEN IN NEAR FUTURE.
HE ALSO ASKED US FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS'
ORGANIZING EFFORTS BUT, TOLD THIS WAS IMPOSSIBLE
SINCE WE DID NOT WISH TO BECOME INVOLVED IN GHANA'S
INTERNAL AFFAIRS, HE NEVERTHELESS PROMISED TO RETURN
NEXT WEEK TO BRIEF US ON DEVELOPMENTS.)

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11. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT STUDENTS INTEND NOT GO BACK
TO CAMPUS UNTIL ACHEAMPONG IS REMOVED OR UNLESS HE
MAKES MAJOR CONCESSIONS. KUMASI STUDENT LEADER SAID
STUDENTS WOULD RETURN IF ACHEAMPONG AGREED TO INTRODUCE

CIVILIAN RULE BY 1978, AS BAR ASSOCIATION AND OTHER
DISSIDENTS HAVE BEEN DEMANDING. WHILE IT IS NOT
IMPOSSIBLE THAT ACHEAMPONG MIGHT PROVE CONCILIATORY
IF IT WERE THE ONLY WAY FOR HIM TO STAY IN POWER
UNTIL NEXT YEAR, WE DOUBT HE WILL AGREE TO SUCH A
HUMILIATING STEP. THUS THE STANDOFF BETWEEN THE SMC
AND THE STUDENTS, BACKED BY DOCTORS AND PROBABLY BY
LAWYERS, IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE.

12. TEXT OF STATEMENT BEING POUCHED AF/W.
SMITH

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